23 June 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: _____

Executive Secretary, Suggestion and
Achievement Awards Committee

SUBJECT : Suggestion No. 76-295, "Added Dimension to
Organization Evaluation System"

Joe:

1. Many thanks for allowing me to read the evaluations
of subject suggestion. I am very pleased with the responses
to date, and will be interested in seeing the DDO one when it
is received. With one exception, they are thorough and
thoughtful, making many points that should and must be
considered by management in deciding whether or not to
include an element of this nature in an organizational
evaluation system. The negative responses tend to illustrate
the fact that any procedure to systematically elicit the
views of employees, in addition to those of the chiefs, as
to how well their component or installation is doing and to
gain employee suggestions as to improvements is apt to be
viewed as a threat, particularly by management levels below the
top. Thus, the tendency is to interpret and dismiss such a
proposal as just another grievance mechanism. Most managers,
rightly so in my opinion, do not want to fish about for more
individual grievances.

2. After reading the evaluations of the suggestion,
I think the write-up did not stress sufficiently the difference
between this proposal and the normal attitude survey (for occa-
sional elicitation of employees' views as to morale and
personnel management problems) or the grievance procedure
(for individual complaints, usually career oriented). It
would have to be carefully and clearly presented as an
integral, additional part of the evaluation done annually
(or for whatever period) by the deputy director and his

evaluation group of the performance of each station or component, the emphasis in the short questionnaire or instrument being on eliciting the employees' views of how well the station or component being evaluated is accomplishing its mission and using its resources in that endeavor and on what the employees think might be done in a positive way to increase station or component effectiveness. Just as the component chief or chief of station is required to contribute his assessment, so the employees might be required, as an integral part of the evaluation process, to contribute their views. Feedback from the entire evaluation would be sent to the component chief, as usual, who should then share the results with his people on a "this is how others judge we are doing and what we should be doing" basis. By virtue of the required responses and the anonymity factor, individuals could not be singled out and perhaps ridiculed or worse having made a contribution, and all would at least have had the opportunity to provide to the evaluators their views of how well their component is doing and how it might do even better. Those who had nothing to say could simply indicate as much on the instrument which they would then send in in the same manner as those who did wish to contribute. People do get tired of surveys, just as managers tire of doing progress reports on how their command is doing. However, just as the latter is accepted as a function of the manager, so the employee could come to accept a regular contribution to the evaluation of his station or component as a part of his responsibility as a member thereof.

3. I agree with the contention that employees should take their ideas for improvements directly to their managers. That is the ideal. It largely depends on initiative by the employee and receptiveness by the manager. It does not, therefore, approach the potential of this suggestion for systematically tapping the brains of our employees for contributions to the evaluation system now in being and to its objective -- organizational effectiveness.

4. I would say after reading the evaluations now in that this is an idea whose time has not yet come for the Agency and the directorates. I expect it will come one day, however, and am happy with the consideration given it at this time by you and the people you asked to evaluate it.

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